

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

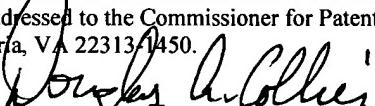
In re patent application:)
Branch et al.) Before the Examiner
Serial No. New Application)
Filed Herewith) Group Art Unit
INSTRUMENTS AND METHODS FOR)Atty Docket No. 4002-3471/PC689.02
MINIMALLY INVASIVE TISSUE)
RETRACTION AND SURGERY) March 3, 2004

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Commissioner of Patents
P. O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Pursuant to the duty of disclosure embodied in 37 C.F.R. §1.56 and 1.98,
Applicant wishes to bring to the attention of the Examiner the items of information listed
on the enclosed Information Disclosure Statement by Applicant. This information has
not been previously submitted in this application, and has not been heretofore cited by the
examiner. Copies of non-US patent references have not been enclosed since the items
were previously submitted or cited in parent application Ser. No. 10/180,658 filed on
June 26, 2002.

Express Mail Label No <u>EV 394 105 990 US</u>	Date of Deposit <u>March 3, 2004</u>
I hereby certify that this paper or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 CFR §1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, Mail Stop Patent Application, P.O. Box 22313, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.  _____ Signature of person mailing paper or fee	

The filing of this Information Disclosure Statement shall not be construed as an admission that the information cited is, or is considered to be, prior art or material to the patentability as defined in 37 C.F.R. §1.56.

This Statement is being submitted before the mailing of a first Office Action on the merits. Therefore, it is believed that no fee is required for consideration of the submitted items. Should any fee be required, please charge such fee to Deposit Account No. 23-3030, but not to include any payment of issue fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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004002-003471.DAC.268325

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE CITATION (Use several sheets if necessary) Sheet 1 of 4				Atty. Docket No. 4002-3471/PC689.02	Serial No. New Application		
				Applicant Charles L. Branch			
				Filing Date Herewith	Group		
U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS							
*Examiner Initial		DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	NAME	CLASS	SUBCLASS	Filing Date If appropriate
	1	563,236	06/1896	Penhall			
	2	2,661,735	12/1953	Darden			
	3	3,054,398	09/1962	Kobler			
	4	3,752,149	08/1973	Ungar et al.			
	5	3,788,318	1/1974	Kim et al.			
	6	4,263,899	04/1981	Burgin			
	7	4,545,374	10/1985	Jacobson			
	8	4,616,635	10/1986	Caspar et al.			
	9	4,716,901	1/1988	Jackson et al.			
	10	4,747,394	5/1988	Watanabe			
	11	4,747,395	05/1988	Brief			
	12	4,765,311	8/1988	Kulik et al.			
	13	4,817,587	4/1989	Janese			
	14	4,852,552	08/1989	Chaux			
	15	4,899,729	2/1990	Gill et al.			
	16	5,027,793	07/1991	Englehardt et al.			
	17	5,052,373	10/1991	Michelson			
	18	5,125,396	6/1992	Ray			
	19	5,139,511	8/1992	Gill et al.			
FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS							
		DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	COUNTRY	CLASS	SUBCLASS	Translation
							Yes
	20	EP1 192 905	9/2001	EP			X
Examiner				Date Considered			
*Examiner: initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance.							

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE CITATION (Use several sheets if necessary)			Atty. Docket No. 4002-3471/PC689.02	Serial No. New Application
			Applicant Charles L. Branch	
Sheet 2 of 4			Filing Date Herewith	Group

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

*Examiner Initial		DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	NAME	CLASS	SUBCLASS	Filing Date If appropriate
	21	5,158,545	10/1992	Trudell et al.			
	22	5,163,949	11/1992	Bonutti			
	23	5,197,971	3/1993	Bonutti			
	24	5,312,417	5/1994	Wilk			
	25	5,339,803	8/1994	Mayzels et al.			
	26	5,353,784	10/1994	Nady-Mohamed			
	27	5,389,080	02/1995	Yoon			
	28	5,490,819	2/1996	Nicholas et al.			
	29	5,503,617	4/1996	Jako			
	30	5,509,893	4/1996	Pracas			
	31	5,512,038	4/1996	O'Neal et al.			
	32	5,549,595	8/1996	Freitas			
	33	5,573,517	11/1996	Bonutti et al.			
	34	5,618,260	4/1997	Caspar et al.			
	35	5,674,240	10/1997	Bonutti et al.			
	36	5,667,481	9/1997	Villalta et al.			
	37	5,681,265	10/1997	Maeda et al.			
	38	5,688,223	11/1997	Rosendahl			
	39	5,707,359	1/1998	Bufalini			
	40	5,728,046	3/1998	Mayer et al.			

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

		DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	COUNTRY	CLASS	SUBCLASS	Translation	
							Yes	No

Examiner

Date Considered

*Examiner: initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE CITATION (Use several sheets if necessary) Sheet 3 of 4				Atty. Docket No. 4002-3471/PC689.02		Serial No. New Application		
				Applicant Charles L. Branch				
				Filing Date Herewith		Group		
				U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS				
*Examiner Initial		DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	NAME	CLASS	SUBCLASS	Filing Date If appropriate	
	41	5,755,732	5/1998	Green et al.				
	42	5,776,054	7/1998	Bobra				
	43	5,779,629	7/1998	Hohlen				
	44	5,786,648	7/1998	Min				
	45	5,795,291	8/1998	Koros et al.				
	46	5,813,978	9/1998	Jako				
	47	5,823,947	10/1998	Yoon et al.				
	48	5,865,731	2/1999	Lenox et al.				
	49	5,888,196	3/1999	Bonutti				
	50	5,928,139	7/1999	Koros et al.				
	51	5,931,777	8/1999	Sava				
	52	5,944,658	8/1999	Koros et al.				
	53	5,951,466	9/1999	Segermark et al.				
	54	5,961,499	10/1999	Bonutti et al.				
	55	5,976,146	11/1999	Ogawa et al.				
	56	6,027,518	02/2000	Gaber				
	57	6,042,540	03/2000	Johnston et al.				
	58	6,074,380	6/2000	Byrne et al.				
	59	6,096,046	8/2000	Weiss				
	60	6,099,547	8/2000	Gellman et al.				
	61	6,149,583	11/2000	Vierra et al.				
FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS								
		DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	COUNTRY	CLASS	SUBCLASS	Translation	
							Yes	No
Examiner				Date Considered				
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004002-003471:DAC:268290